THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) Government have initiated a number of steps to increase indigenous production of crude oil. These include development of new oil and gas fields, additional development of some existing fields. Besides, promoting conservation of petroleum products in various fields, efforts are being made to increase the refining capacity by taking up expansion of existing refineries and by setting up of new grass-root refineries in the public sector, joint sector and private sector in order to reduce expenditure on imports of petroleum products.

(b) The import bill for crude and petroleum products during 1991-92, 1992-93 and 1993-1994 was about Rs. 13038 crores Rs. 17046 crores and Rs. 17730 crores respectively.

(c) and (d) The Government have approved the import of 24.230 MMT of crude oil and 14.773 MMT of petroleum products during the year 1994-95.

Joint venture by petroleum companies

1229. SHRI S. MUTHUMANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum Corporations are considering to form a joint venture with some private company to bid for the various blocks being thrown open by Government for oil exploration and production;

(b) whether the proposed joint venture company would be a Government Organisation; and

(c) whether any proposal has been received from the private companies to be party to the said joint venture; if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Indian Oil Corporation, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation and Bharat Petroleum Corporation are considering to form a non-Government/private Joint Venture Company with private companies for oil exploration and production. The details have not yet been worked out.

Joint venture of Bharat Petroluem Corporation and Shell International

1230. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient feautres of the protocol signed between Bharat Petroleum corporation and Shell International or blending and marketing of Shell Lubricants in India;

(b) whether the initial blending of Shell branded Lubricants will be carried out at Bharat Petroleum corporation Limited;

(c) if so, by when the joint venture company is likely to set up its own blending plants, and

(d) the future of existing blending plants of the Bharat Petroleum corporation including its manpower?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) The salient features of the agreement between Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Shell Overseas Investment B.V. (Shell) for blending and marketing of Shell branded lubricants in India, are as follows:—

(i) BPCL and Shell will set up a joint venture company (JVC) in India for blending and marketing of (Shell) branded lubricants with technology to be provided by shell.

(ii) The authorised and paid-up capital of the JVC will be Rs. 130 crores and Rs. 32.50 crores respectively, to be shared in the ratio of 49:51 by BPCL and Shell respectively.

(iii) Shell, through its wholly owned subsidiary Shell International Petroleum Company, will provide the latest